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MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF

"Faith is the strength by which a shattered world shall emerge into the light."
- Helen Keller
MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF

This last year has made me proud and honored to be a member of the Seattle Fire Department with all of the amazing work we have done serving community.

Little did I think a year ago that we would be operating in the spaces we have been, and yet here we are. The public trusts our ability to respond to fires and medical emergencies – this is our core work, and we do it well. But the pandemic has challenged us with new and different ways to serve.

When the pandemic began, we knew we needed to test firefighters to keep them – and the patients we cared for – safe as we continued our work in community. We then took that newly acquired skill into long-term care and other congregate living facilities, where the disease was spreading and having such devastating impacts on its residents. Shortly after, we set up four sites to ensure free, accessible COVID-19 testing. By the end of 2020, we had administered more than 524,000 tests at those sites and were preparing to become vaccinators against this disease.

Counter to our thinking, the pandemic drove a decrease in EMS calls in 2020 – a trend we believe resulted from fewer people being outside their homes coupled with a fear of being exposed to the virus – and a rise in fire responses.

But COVID-19 has not been the only challenging circumstance in which we found ourselves.

The high span of the West Seattle Bridge closed suddenly on March 23 after the discovery of accelerated concrete cracking, cutting off a vital transportation lifeline.

Peaceful demonstrations and violent activities defined our summer here and across the world in response to George Floyd’s death on May 25. The formation of an occupied zone on Capitol Hill required us to adapt our fire and EMS strategies in that area, and the conversations around race and equity weighed heavily on the hearts and minds of our personnel. We had already planned on having these critical conversations within SFD, but the context made them even more timely.

In September and October, we deployed dozens of specially-trained strike team members to fight the wildfires along the west coast and assist with search and rescue efforts in the devastated areas.

As we ended the year, we readied ourselves once again for a new role – vaccinators. If we ever doubted our abilities, 2020 showed us how innovative, adaptable and resilient we as a fire department and community can be.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Fire Chief Harold D. Scoggins
Seattle Fire Department

OUR VISION

The Seattle Fire Department: a national leader in responding to and preventing emergencies with a commitment to excellence and teamwork.

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Seattle Fire Department is to save lives and protect property through emergency medical service, fire and rescue response and fire prevention. We respond immediately when any member of our community needs help with professional, effective and compassionate service.
ABOUT US

The Seattle Fire Department strives to provide the best service possible by putting the community and its needs first. It is the department’s goal to actively engage Seattle’s residents. The Seattle Fire Department values and respects diverse internal and external cultures, constantly working to improve service delivery to all community members. Through feedback and other cooperative communication processes, the department works to ensure the community is informed of and able to access programs and services.

The Seattle Fire Department was established by Seattle Ordinance No. 1212 on Oct. 17, 1889. The services provided by the Seattle Fire Department include:

- Critical fire suppression and emergency medical care
- Technical teams, including technical and heavy rescue, dive rescue, tunnel rescue, marine fire response and hazardous materials (HazMat) response
- Fire prevention and public education
- Fire investigation
- Mutual aid response to neighboring jurisdictions

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
• 33 Fire Stations
• Medic One at Harborview Medical Center
• 32 Engines
• 12 Ladder Trucks
  * (One ladder truck is part of the Rescue 1 Unit)
• 5 Aid Units
  (Basic Life Support)
• 2 Peak-time Aid Units
• 8 Medic Units
  (Advanced Life Support)
• 1 Health One Unit
• 2 Air Trucks
• 2 Hose Wagons
• 4 Fire Boats
• Additional specialized apparatus

*In response to the closure of the West Seattle Bridge, SFD staffed an additional ladder truck (Ladder 13) and medic unit (Medic 26) to serve the residents of West Seattle.

*Firefighters at Station 31 were relocated to neighboring fire stations on June 18, 2019; Ladder 5 to Station 39, Medic 31 to Station 35, Aid 31 to Station 24 and Engine 31 to Station 17.
TIERED RESPONSE SYSTEM

The Seattle Fire Department provides emergency response through five battalions, consisting of 33 fire stations (plus Battalion 3/Medic One at Harborview Medical Center) strategically placed around the city in order to maximize coverage and minimize response time.

These stations are staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by four separate shifts. To meet the needs of the city and provide emergency response services to the residents of Seattle, the department has 1,008 uniformed personnel and 77 civilian personnel. Uniform personnel includes 940 firefighter/EMTs (including 36 chiefs) and 68 firefighter/paramedics. Every day, there are 216 members responding to emergencies across the city (220 with upstaffing for two daytime aid cars).

Depending on the type of emergency, the Fire Alarm Center will dispatch the appropriate resources to provide fire suppression, Basic Life Support (BLS), Advanced Life Support (ALS), Health One services and technical operations. All Seattle firefighters are certified emergency medical technicians. In a BLS incident, a fire engine, aid car and/or ladder truck will be the first responders. If a medical emergency requires ALS, one of the eight medic units will also be dispatched to the scene. Certain type of emergencies require multiple units. For example, an individual experiencing sudden cardiac arrest will have three units come to their aid. Similarly for fires and other emergencies, the dispatcher will assign the appropriate resources to protect life and property.

RESPONSES

2020 Busiest Units

- Aid 25 (located at Station 25) responded to 4,710 incidents.
- Medic 1 (located at Harborview) responded to 2,654 incidents.
- Engine 28 (located at Station 28) responded to 3,052 incidents.
- Ladder 4 (located at Station 2) responded to 2,092 incidents.
- Battalion 2 (located at Station 25) responded to 1,205 incidents.
CASCADE OF EVENTS

The Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) has defined response time elements as a cascade of events. This cascade is similar to that used by the medical community to describe the events leading up to the initiation, mitigation and ultimate outcome of a cardiac arrest. It is imperative to keep in mind that certain intervals described, such as turnout and travel time, can be directly influenced by the fire service via station locations and design, staffing levels as well as local rules and procedures for response. Other factors, such as the alarm interval, can be influenced indirectly through public education and engineering initiatives. The fire service can also influence the call-processing interval through its ability to define standards and compel performance by its dispatch centers.

TIME TEMPERATURE STANDARD

The “time-temperature curve” standard is based on data from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and the Insurance Services Organization (ISO), which have established that a typical point source of ignition in a residential house will “flash over” at some time between five and 10 minutes after ignition, turning a typical “room and contents” fire into a structural fire of some magnitude.

TIME TEMPERATURE CURVE

The utility of the time-temperature curve for fire station placement is limited to a number of factors including:

- The time from ignition to flashover varies widely (5-30 minutes depending on building characteristics); thus it cannot provide a valid basis for the allocation of resources.
- The curve is constantly shifting, given the numerous changes in building construction, built in suppression systems, the increased use of fire resistive materials for furniture and other items typically found in the interior of occupied buildings.

CARDIAC ARREST SURVIVAL RATE

In communities where the fire service is the principal provider of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) first response, the goal is for basic life support (CPR and defibrillation) to be available to the victim of a cardiac arrest within four minutes of the event, and that advanced life support (paramedic service) should be available within eight minutes or less of the event. Early notification, distribution and concentration of emergency response services are thus paramount to successful resuscitation efforts.

THE GOLDEN HOUR STANDARD

In trauma events, the golden hour is the historic benchmark applied to victims with significant critical traumatic injuries. The golden hour reflects the concept that survivability decreases significantly if the patient isn’t in the operating room within one hour of receiving a critical traumatic injury.
These response standards measure the delivery of fire suppression, technical rescue response and emergency medical services. Guided by National Fire Protection Association Standard 1710, the standards protect the community and occupational health and safety of Seattle Fire employees. The call processing standard is guided by National Fire Protection Association Standard 1221(2019).

**RESPONSE TOTALS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Responses</td>
<td>94,780</td>
<td>91,716</td>
<td>80,316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Life Support</td>
<td>58,694</td>
<td>56,631</td>
<td>50,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Life Support</td>
<td>17,790</td>
<td>16,349</td>
<td>10,817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire &amp; Specialty Teams</td>
<td>17,080</td>
<td>18,088</td>
<td>18,094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1,089</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutual Aid</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For 2020 "Other Responses" include responses where a single battalion chief was dispatched.*

**CALL VOLUME**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Calls</td>
<td>191,112</td>
<td>169,153</td>
<td>165,846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Calls</td>
<td>149,844</td>
<td>134,277</td>
<td>139,498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin Calls</td>
<td>41,268</td>
<td>34,876</td>
<td>26,348</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The Fire Alarm Center is staffed 24/7 by firefighter/EMTs who have completed more than 1,000 hours of additional training to become certified dispatchers.*
### CALL PROCESSING

**Percent Call Processing Time is <= 60 seconds**

NFPA 1221 (2019) states that 90% of the time dispatch centers should process high acuity fire and EMS calls within 60 seconds. This is the time from when the phone is first picked up to a unit assigned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

**Percent EMS turnout time is <= 60 seconds**

SFD turnout time standard is 60 seconds, 90% of the time. This is the time span between a unit being assigned to being en route.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Percent arrival of first BLS unit is <= 4 minutes**

SFD response time standard for the arrival of the first Basic Life Support unit (aid car, fire engine, ladder truck) is 4 minutes, 90% of the time. This is the time span between a unit being en route to on-scene.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Percent arrival of first ALS unit is <= 8 minutes**

SFD response time standard for the arrival of an Advanced Life Support unit (medic Unit) two firefighter/paramedics is 8 minutes, 90% of the time. This is the time span between a unit being en route to on-scene.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Daily average number of responses per medic unit**

2020 number does not include Medic 26, as it went in service in late Q2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Advanced Life Support transports by medics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5,393</td>
<td>5,569</td>
<td>4,414</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### FIREFIGHTING

**Percent fire turnout time is <= 80 seconds**

SFD turnout time standard is 80 seconds, 90% of the time. This is the time span between a unit being assigned to being en route.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Percent arrival of first engine is <= 4 minutes**

SFD response time standard for the arrival of the first fire engine is 4 minutes, 90% of the time. This is the time span between a unit being en route to on-scene.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Percent arrival of first Full Alarm is <= 8 minutes**

SFD response time standard for the arrival of a full first alarm assignment (15 firefighters) when responding to a fire is 8 minutes, 90% of the time. This is the time span between a unit being en route to on-scene.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data has been updated from previous years to reflect more accurate information from our system or updated NFPA standards.*
Many of the photos featured in this report were taken prior to public health guidance on mask protocols.
In late January, the first case of COVID-19 in the U.S. was documented in Snohomish County, and weeks later, a large outbreak in a care facility in east King County would solidify the Puget Sound region as the pandemic's early epicenter. As information about this new virus emerged, Seattle Fire leaned into its Continuity of Operations and Pandemic plans to implement procedures to protect personnel and patients. The department also began holding frequent department-wide video conference calls to create clear, consistent communications with all personnel. Many of the civilian staff were directed to work from home, creating new challenges to support frontline responders. These briefings became important dialogues to learn the latest medical updates, reinforce new protocols, answer staff questions and be connected with one another.

PROTECTING OUR MEMBERS AND PATIENTS

On Jan. 22, the department began the first of many adjustments of its 911 emergency dispatch protocols to screen for the coronavirus symptoms in callers. While calls took longer to process, this allowed dispatchers to alert firefighter/EMTs and paramedics to wear additional personal protective equipment (PPE) when they arrived and take additional precautions that would continue to evolve over the course of the pandemic.

Dispatch Protocols

Early on, when a caller presented with COVID-19 symptoms or it was unclear to dispatchers, the department decided that only two firefighter/EMTs fully outfitted in PPE should triage the patient. The other two members would then outfit in full PPE if appropriate before assisting. This allowed the department to provide quality care while reducing potential exposure to the virus and preserving a limited PPE supply.

Planning and Exposure groups

The department also stood up a COVID-19 Planning Group responsible for developing new internal procedures for our personnel and facilities. Following public health guidance and direction from Seattle Fire’s medical director, this group developed procedures for firefighter quarantine and isolation, decontamination of fire stations, return to work after illness guidelines, PPE use requirements, first responder testing, FAQ documents and more.

After the first Seattle firefighter contracted COVID-19 in March 2020, a subset of the Planning Group – the Exposure Notification Group – quickly went to work to identify who needed to quarantine and self-isolate. They would soon realize that this process would need to be conducted many more times, as more Seattle firefighters contracted the disease over time.
Decontamination Team
The department’s Hazardous Materials Team, which is located at Fire Station 10, implemented a COVID-19 Decontamination Unit to help deep clean fire facilities. This unit conducted proactive cleaning of all fire facilities and reactive decontamination of fire stations when positive COVID-19 cases in fire personnel were reported.

Logistics and Purchasing
Seattle Fire’s Services Division does many things to keep first responders and civilian personnel capable of performing their jobs. In a normal year, all purchasing and supplies are managed through this division. They were called to a higher level service as the pandemic demanded greater purchasing of essential cleaning and PPE supplies, all while maintaining regular services such as daily mail delivery and outfitting companies with firefighting supplies.

Personal Protective Equipment
To help protect patients served by Seattle Fire, all firefighter/EMTs and paramedics were required to wear enhanced PPE when responding to possible COVID patients (and eventually all patients). This included N95 masks, eyewear, gloves and gowns. This level of continued protection would not have been possible without the establishment of a City task force and the generous donations from many individuals and organizations.

Peer Support
The pandemic changed everyone’s lives and created much uncertainty and fear. For the first responder community, the pressures intensified even more with the heightened risk of contracting the disease and the ever changing environment in which they served. Seattle Fire’s Peer Support team provided weekly resources and outreach to civilian and uniformed staff to help others manage stress more effectively.
STANDING UP COVID-19 TESTING

Early in the pandemic, COVID-19 testing was extremely limited. Seattle Fire and the City recognized that front line workers such as firefighters and law enforcement needed access to testing to prevent spread in the first responder workforce. The forward-thinking steps taken by the City in March would create a whole new role for Seattle Fire in the year ahead.

After King County EMS and Seattle Fire received approval from the state Dept. of Health in March 2020 to do so, Seattle became the first in the nation to implement a testing site for first responders, conducted by first responders. This was done in partnership with the Seattle Police Department and served as the model for many other fire agencies nationwide.

The primary mission of the Seattle Fire Department is to save lives, so when the Mayor asked the Fire Chief to help set up City testing for the public, the answer was yes.

In April of 2020, the Seattle Fire began to test staff and residents at long-term care facilities and adult homes, where the disease was causing the most suffering and worst consequences. They also built capacity by training staff how to conduct the nasal swab tests going forward. This program received national recognition and tested more than 1,500 people in 23 facilities before Public Health took over the pilot in June.
Months into the pandemic, community testing continued to be a struggle in the effort to track the disease’s progression and conduct effective contact tracing. Drawing from its mobile assessment team work, in June 2020, Seattle Fire, in partnership with the Mayor’s Office and the University of Washington, established two city-funded, drive-up community test sites. By mid summer, this grew to four sites staffed and run by the Seattle Fire Department: SODO, Rainier Beach, West Seattle and Aurora. Seattle Fire had conducted more than 524,000 COVID-19 tests on members of the public by year’s end.

Seattle Fire’s role in COVID-19 testing didn’t stop with administering the nasal swab. A member of the positive contact team reached out to more than 18,000 individuals about their positive result from a test conducted at one of the City’s four testing sites. They successfully reached nearly 12,000 of those contacted.

During this call, staff confirmed the positive test result, helped the patient work through possible exposures they may have had and urged the patient to isolate until symptoms had subsided for 72 hours. These “positive contacts” helped fill an important role in the contact tracing process so critical to stopping the further spread of the virus.

As 2020 ended, the department began planning efforts for how we could transition community testing sites into fixed vaccination sites. The City has plans to utilize firefighter/EMTs to help administer the vaccine to those eligible.

A total of 55 Seattle firefighters reported contracting COVID-19. Only one or two cases were these from patient exposure. Thankfully, almost all members have fully recovered.

524k COVID-19 tests conducted at community testing sites in 2020
OUTREACH DURING COVID

To help prevent the further spread of COVID-19 in our region, the department put a halt on all in-person public education and CPR classes in February 2020. The Public Affairs division transitioned outreach efforts to a mostly virtual environment, which required innovative approaches to reach community members with fire safety messages and public relations.

Regional coordination
The division’s public information team began meeting weekly with other public information officers as part of the King County Fire Chiefs Association to collaboratively push out consistent COVID-19 and public safety messaging. The group created multiple social media toolkits, held virtual press conferences and created an inspirational video of the King County Fire Chiefs Association at T-Mobile Park. In April, the group held a healthcare appreciation event in collaboration with firefighters, paramedics, EMTs and police officers throughout King County to display their support for all healthcare workers. Held at 15 hospitals across the county, the event celebrated, encouraged and thanked healthcare workers for their compassion and dedication in caring for our community during the COVID-19 crisis.

Friday Night Lights
Seattle Fire partnered with Seattle Police to host four Friday Night Lights events in April and May. Fire engines, ladder trucks, police patrol cars and command staff travelled slowly through neighborhoods, flashing lights and sounding sirens to let the community know they were here to serve during this challenging time. Community members from thousands of homes waved from windows and doorsteps as the apparatus passed by. Firefighters’ children used their skills to help create hand-drawn signs for the fire crews to wave during the event, and the Department of Neighborhoods supplied vehicles with artistic #seattletogether signs.

Donation management
The department was completely humbled when donation offers of PPE, cleaning supplies and meals poured in from neighbors, local businesses, large corporations and foundations. Public Affairs coordinated many of the offers and redirected food to local shelters where appropriate. Many of the donations were utilized to help protect first responders working out in the field and to feed personnel working at the community testing sites. The department continues to be impressed at the generosity of the community, businesses and foundations, especially in a time where they have been some of the hardest hit by the economic impacts of the pandemic.
NEW FIRE STATION 31

In response to air quality concerns at Fire Station 31, Seattle Fire relocated the personnel and apparatus to neighboring stations in June 2019. After evaluating the station's physical condition and firefighter's concerns, the City decided in October 2019 to pursue siting a new station elsewhere.

Within several months, the City had chosen an interim location and site for a permanent station. In March 2020, Seattle Fire participated in a public meeting to collect community feedback on both land acquisition deals, and the Seattle City Council approval the agreements in May 2020.

The interim Fire Station 31 at 10503 Interlake Avenue North will bring Engine 31, Ladder 5, Aid 31 and Medic 31 back together in July 2021. Construction on the new permanent fire station is tentative, but could be ready for general contractor bid in 2023.

WEST SEATTLE BRIDGE CLOSURE AND RESPONSE

On March 23, the Seattle Dept. of Transportation closed the high span of the West Seattle Bridge because of accelerated concrete cracking. With this major transportation corridor cut off, Seattle Fire analyzed its response data and recommended adding a medic unit and ladder truck to West Seattle. This provided the community reassurance the department could maintain a high standard of service.

With the support of the Mayor and City Council, in June, Seattle Fire stationed Medic 26 and two paramedics at Station 26 and Ladder 13 with four firefighter-EMTs at Station 37. The fire department also established a partnership with AirLift Northwest to provide air transport if needed for a critical medical emergency.
CIVIL UNREST

The death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police sparked massive demonstrations and protests here and around the world. The first protest in Seattle occurred on May 29, and over the subsequent days, was followed by a violent, chaotic scene in downtown streets. Vehicles were set on fire, and restaurant and storefront windows smashed and looted.

The threat of larger fires led the department to seek mutual aid from the county and state, and they responded by sending seven strike teams that first weekend. Seattle Fire also implemented its civil disobedience policy, which adjusted staffing and readiness protocols.

As the summer continued, so too did protests. Most were peaceful, but there were small groups determined to cause property damage. Anger at police led to the formation of an “autonomous zone” on Capitol Hill in early June.

Due to the activities in the zone, Seattle Fire adjusted its response strategies and implemented its Scenes of Violence protocols for any aid and fire calls into that area. That meant coordinating with law enforcement to ensure the scene could be entered safely without endangering firefighter lives. Seattle Fire also upstaffed personnel and response apparatus at Fire Station 25.

Thanks to the fundraising efforts of the Seattle Fire Foundation, the department was able to outfit firefighters in high-risk areas with protective ballistic gear.

SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS

March 27

**Marina Fire:** Multiple vessels were quickly engulfed in flames during a fire at the Jim Clark Marina. Heavy smoke billowed high into the sky, making the fire visible for miles around. Fireboat Leschi provided primary fire suppression while shoreside units fought the fire from land. Cause of fire undetermined.

March 28

**Vacant Building Fire:** Crews responded to the 600 block of S. Roy St., facing Aurora Ave. N. for a fire in a vacant structure. Firefighters fought the fire defensively, and one firefighter sustained minor injuries.

April 11

**2-Alarm Fire in West Seattle:** Firefighters arrived to find a residential building under construction fully engulfed in flames at 48th Ave. SW. Crews fought the fire defensively and utilized the ladder pipes on the ladder trucks to apply water on the fire from above. The fire destroyed the primary fire building and damaged neighboring homes and two vehicles.
April 23

**2-Alarm Fire in North Seattle:**
Firefighters responded to a four-story building under construction at N. 45th St. and 1st Ave. NE for flames showing from all sides of the structure. Crews fought the fire defensively and had it under control within 30 minutes. No injuries were reported.

April 27

**2-Alarm Fire in Central District:**
Firefighters responded to flames showing from a two-story residence on 25th Ave. The fire had originated in the basement and spread to both floors above, and one resident was trapped inside. Crews conducted a targeted search, located the occupant and transported him to Harborview in serious condition. Fire caused by embers from a basement fireplace that ignited nearby combustibles.

June 25

**2-Alarm Fire in Chinatown/International District:**
Crews responded to find a fire in a three-story commercial building on S. Weller St. The fire spread through the entire structure, causing the roof and sections of the third floor to collapse. Fire investigators were unable to determine a cause due to structural instability. Total estimated loss is $2.5 million.

July 10

**Rescue Swimmer Response:** Rescue swimmers responded to a person in distress in the water along Alaskan Way. When crews arrived, they quickly identified and marked the location of the adult male who was still above water struggling. Rescue swimmers jumped into action and conducted a surface water rescue, securing the man before he went under. He was transported in stable condition to the hospital via medic unit.

Photo Credits: John Odegard
July 14

2-Alarm Fire on Aurora Ave.: A building fire and multi-casualty incident response was sent to Aurora Ave. N. when seven people were injured in a three-story motel fire. Three of those injured were reported to be in critical condition at the time of transport. The Seattle Police Department and Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives took over the fire investigation.

July 18

Fatal Fire in Ravenna: Firefighters responded to a well-involved house fire on Ravenna Ave. NE and received reports of people possibly inside. Crews conducted a transitional attack, initially applying water from the exterior and then moved interior. Ladder companies searched the residence and unfortunately found one male deceased. An elderly female and adult male were able to escape the home.

Aug. 9

Two Fatal Drownings in Lake Washington: Rescue swimmers, divers and response boats were dispatched to Lake Washington on a summer evening for two separate drownings. Crews searched both areas for over an hour, but unfortunately an adult male and adult female were deceased. An unfortunate reminder that drownings can happen when you least expect it and to always wear a life jacket when swimming in open water.

Aug. 20

3-Alarm Fire in North Beacon Hill: Crews responded to a well-involved fire in a three-story building under construction that had spread to nearby structures. Firefighters worked efficiently to keep additional structures from also catching fire. In total, four buildings sustained heavy fire damage. The cause of the fire was ruled as incendiary (intentionally set). This fire was one of many intentionally set fires in the Rainier Ave. S. and Beacon Hill vicinity.
Dec. 14  
**Trench Rescue in South Seattle:**
Due to quick thinking from neighbors, and the work of firefighters from Stations 28, 30 and Rescue 1, a private company construction worker was saved from a trench and transported with non-life threatening injuries to the hospital. He was working in the trench when he was pinned against the foundation of a house by an old cement staircase that had collapsed approximately 8-10 feet into the ditch. Trench rescues are low frequency, high risk events and require an immense amount of technical skill to conduct.

Dec. 24  
**3-Alarm Fire in University District:**
Crews responded to NE 50th St. for a well-involved fire in the vacant Seven Gables Theater. Firefighters fought the fire defensively and poured water on the fire from the exterior. Fire investigators were unable to determine the cause of the fire due to structural instability. No other buildings sustained significant damage from the fire.

Dec. 29  
**2-Alarm Fire in Lake City Neighborhood:**
A one-story strip mall was fully engulfed in flames at the 3000 block of NE 127th St., which damaged seven businesses. Sections of the roof collapsed during the fire fight. Fire investigators determined the fire was intentionally set, and the total estimated loss was $2.7 million.

Seattle Fire’s Wildland Team members had another busy summer and fall, deploying to several locations in WA, OR and CA during the wildland season.
MEDIC ONE PROGRAM

Each year, the Seattle Fire Department responds to more emergency medical calls than fires. In 2020, 76% of department responses were medical in nature.

All Seattle firefighters are trained emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and take continuing education each year to build on their skills. Of those, 68 firefighters have chosen to further specialize their training and serve as paramedics for Seattle Fire.

To become a paramedic, candidates go through a rigorous 10-month program with the University of Washington and Harborview Medical Center, completing 2,750 hours of classroom training, clinical rotations and field training. All students in the program – regardless of the agency they work for – receive their field experience on Seattle Fire’s Medic units and are mentored by Seattle Fire paramedics.

50TH ANNIVERSARY

2020 marked the 50th anniversary of the Medic One program. In 1968, Dr. Leonard Cobb, director of Cardiology at Harborview, approached Seattle Fire Chief Gordon Vickery with a groundbreaking concept – cardiac patient survival rates would improve if they receive effective pre-hospital care.

In the decade prior, Seattle Fire provided basic first aid and transportation to hospitals on a limited basis. Dr. Cobb saw the potential to do more and proposed a study to answer two questions: Is it possible to save the lives of critically ill patients outside the hospital? Can we train firefighters to provide advanced care under the remote-direction of a physician?

“What they had was an organization,” said Dr. Cobb. “Chief Vickery had the dispatching arrangement all set up; they’d been dispatching to fires and first aid for a long time. They would become part of the medical delivery system, and it was an important role. But it wasn’t just, ‘Let me use your car.’ We trained their people. They would learn to do CPR, defibrillation and intubation.”

A year later, Dr. Michael Copass joined Dr. Cobb to instruct Seattle firefighters in the first Medic One Paramedic Training Class. History was made on March 7, 1970, as Seattle Fire paramedics were dispatched to their first call. In the first 18 months, paramedics resuscitated 111 clinically dead patients, and another 885 heart disease patients were successfully assisted, as were 1,125 patients victims of drowning, electrocution and auto accidents - answering both of Dr. Cobb’s questions with a resounding yes.
MEDIC ONE FLEET UPGRADES

Seattle Fire began replacing its aging Medic One fleet with two new units in 2020. The change not only complies with the established life-cycle but also provides additional safety features to protect patients and paramedics. Medic 1 and Medic 10 were put in service in November 2020. The remaining new units will be on the road in 2021. Notable differences in the new Horton units:

- Its truck chassis increases payload capacity
- Four-wheel drive improves navigability during poor weather
- Is the only crash/roll tested body on the market
- Four-point seatbelts for medics
- Side entry allowing for lower first step into the unit

SPOTLIGHT: Dr. Michael Sayre, SFD's Medical Director

Dr. Michael Sayre is Seattle Fire’s medical director, providing medical oversight and accountability for emergency medical technicians and paramedics. In his role with Seattle Fire, Dr. Sayre works closely with King County’s medical director, Dr. Thomas Rea, to ensure consistent EMS practices across the county.

Dr. Sayre’s role was never more important than in 2020. Under his guidance, Seattle Fire became the first department in the nation to conduct COVID-19 testing of first responders by first responders, which served as a model and training site for the state and beyond. That effort led to the creation of mobile assessment teams that tested staff and residents in skilled care facilities and other congregate settings hit hard by the virus.

This further laid the groundwork for Seattle Fire to establish and run four City testing sites – conducting 524,000 nasopharyngeal swabs between June 5 and the year’s end.

Dr. Sayre also kept a close eye on Seattle Fire EMS call data to identify areas in the city where COVID-19 might be spreading before testing was widely available. Using the data, he also identified that dispatchers were receiving fewer 911 calls for heart attacks and strokes while crews were attending higher numbers of deaths. This led to county-wide public messaging efforts to address public fear of calling 911 and possibly contracting COVID-19 while seeking medical help.

His attention to emerging research on the coronavirus and guidance on medical protocols and PPE use was invaluable to protecting Seattle Fire personnel from contracting the disease from patient contact.
HEALTH ONE

In 2020, the Health One program matured, grew and established itself as SFD’s newest line of service. Based out of headquarters, Health One responds with a three-person specially-trained crew: two firefighters and a Human Services Department case manager. The unit’s mission is twofold: respond to lower acuity alarms in place of operations companies and provide enhanced services and care coordination for our clients.

With this broad mission, the Health One unit encounters clients in several ways. About 56% of its 802 dispatched responses in 2020 resulted from a 9-1-1 call, either directly from the Fire Alarm Center or requested by a company on scene. The remainder of the responses were proactive outreaches to known clients to help them connect with care, address needs and reduce their reliance on 9-1-1.

Health One’s growth as a program is reflected in its utilization and its partnerships. Within the Operations division, 100% of aid cars and 85% of engine companies requested Health One to a scene in 2020 as did majorities of ladder and medic units. The Health One team forged many new partnerships over the year – with fellow crisis response units, homeless service providers, medical clinics, outreach specialists and more.

Throughout the year, the team encountered – and served – a huge array of clients. From a 26-year-old man looking for a shelter bed to a 92-year-old woman with mobility needs to a 44-year-old man with an opioid use disorder, Health One safely and effectively brought the Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) program’s skills to the field. Among these were transport to clinics, crisis de-escalation, referral to services, assistance navigating benefits programs, and, in all cases, a team willing to listen with patience and compassion. As services city-wide shut down due to COVID-19, Health One remained operational to serve the fire department and its clients.

Funding was approved in 2020 for a second Health One unit, to become operational in 2021.

- 53% of clients experiencing homelessness
- 10 firefighters trained in the program
- 4.68 average operations division survey score (1-5 scale)
- 4 average responses per 10-hour shift
Health One received a referral from Aid 4 for a 48-year-old woman who had suffered an injury from an assault. The client told firefighters that she was fleeing domestic violence and had insecure housing. The Health One unit reached out to the client by phone and discovered she had recently arrived from out of state and was fleeing domestic violence. Her current living arrangement was unstable, and she requested help with accessing support for victims of domestic violence. Health One case managers spoke to the client on multiple occasions to offer ideas and options she could consider pursuing. Health One also contacted multiple housing and support programs in an effort to find a location that had openings and would fit her needs. After the client selected an appropriate program, Health One met her at her family member’s apartment and assisted her with luggage and arranged transportation in a Lyft. The case managers have had follow-up conversations with this client by phone as she seeks permanent secure housing and support, and the team has been reassured that she is making progress.

Health One was requested by Aid 25 regarding a client who indicated he was seeking shelter. A phone consult with the client revealed a history of severe depression, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and developmental disability. The client was previously affiliated with Sound Health services but no longer had a support system. Health One made in-person contact with the client and observed that he appeared under the influence of alcohol and had cuts on his fingers. The unit provided basic first aid to treat his minor injuries. Health One contacted the Mobile Crisis Team and briefed them upon arrival. The Mobile Crisis Team assessed the client with Health One and the two units jointly determined that transport to Recovery Cafe was the best course of action. Transport was completed and the units returned to service to assist other clients.

VULNERABLE ADULT PROGRAM

In 2020, SFD saw a dramatic rise in the number of patients reported as vulnerable adults – suffering from abuse, neglect, self neglect or exploitation. The jump in referrals is attributable to the secondary impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, with patients increasingly cut off from caregivers, family and other supports. Nearly 230 Seattle firefighters submitted more than 500 reports, a testament to ongoing training and members’ desire to obtain more help for patients in need.
PREPARING FOR OUR FUTURE
IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Beyond the impact of COVID-19, 2020 brought significant change for both in-service and recruit training.

**Introduced Activity Scheduler Drills**
The use of the Activity Scheduler to assign Operations training monthly led to a sizeable increase in recorded training hours for the year 2020, up 42,000 training hours from 2019. In 2020, Seattle Fire recorded 157,000 hours of training, of which 84,000 were fire-related training hours, a 64% increase year-to-year.

**Reformatting of CBT curriculum delivery**
For CBT training, manipulative company skill evolutions were moved to a response model format where the company arrives at a location and completes the evaluation and treatment of a simulated patient. Beyond allowing companies to demonstrate collective skills this model allowed the training to be centrally run in each battalion, reducing travel and out of service time.

**Implementation of the first phase of Driver/Operator Certification**
Seattle Fire is requiring all drivers/operators of engine and ladder trucks be certified by December 2021. In 2020, all assigned drivers were certified on the written portion of the testing process.

**Captains Academy**
In October, 13 Captains attended the week-long, 40-hour academy, with much of the content being developed by the Employee Development Leadership Committee (EDLC). Four have since been promoted.

**Battalion Chiefs Academy**
In December, nine candidates attended the academy, a collaborative effort by EDLC and Training Division. More emphasis was placed on developing executive leadership at the Chief’s level, with emphasis on the HR component.

**Revamp of the Acquired Structure Training Program**
This program accounts for thousands of hours of realistic destructive and live-fire trainings in buildings scheduled for demolition across the City. In 2020, the division simplified and updated paperwork, created a flow chart to guide the process, implemented a system to track buildings and built a website to educate community members about this valuable program. The program was also advertised to a wider audience, and participation in the trainings was offered regionally to neighboring fire departments. The foundation was laid in 2020 for an expansion of the program, and members will continually work to refine methods used to secure buildings for training. Acquired structures offer the most realistic training platform available and would not be possible without the donations from building and property owners.
RECRUIT TRAINING

Two classes of recruits - Class 112 and Class 113 - took place in 2020. Recruit Class 113 was the first to employ SFD firefighters as guest instructors. Between the two classes, 58 new firefighters entered Operations. To support recruit firefighting, 16 EMTs were trained by SFD members for Recruit Class 114.

SEAPREP

For 2020, the decision was made to go virtual with the program. The challenges were made clear when the initial orientation in March, with more than 100 participants, crashed the system. Undaunted, the SeaPrep team modified their approach and was able to use the Microsoft Teams platform with external users. Fitness and tactical materials were provided through videos, with virtual office hours held at regular intervals. SFD’s candidate prep program was the only one in the region that continued to operate throughout the pandemic.
INVESTING IN FUTURE LEADERS

Employee Development and Leadership Committee (EDLC)
The collaborative working relationship between Training Division and the EDLC lends strength to every offering SFD provides to its members. In 2020, EDLC began expanding that concept to include a professional staff development pathway.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

Every Seattle Fire employee participated in three seminars discussing awareness of implicit bias, structural racism and developing skills in relating to others from racially diverse backgrounds.

The department also graduated in October its second cohort of civilian and uniformed members from the Executive Leadership Academy, a leadership development program led by the U.W. Foster School of Business. The class practiced its leadership as it transitioned from in-person seminars to online classes mid session.

Additional training that occurred in 2020: Firefighter 2 testing and certification; extrication training; rope and confined space training; and multi-company operations.

Use of the Joint Training Facility
To ensure safety, modifications were made so that everyone at the JTF stayed strictly masked and maintained distance, even while sharing space with Seattle Public Utilities apprentice training. Designated entry and exit points with mandated temp checks became the new routine.
The Fire Prevention Division is responsible for the implementation, administration and enforcement of the City’s fire code. The code provides fire and life safety standards for buildings, activities and hazardous processes, helping to protect people and property from the hazards of fire, explosion or dangerous conditions where they live, recreate and do business. Fire code compliance also helps ensure firefighter and emergency responder safety during emergency operations.

**SPECIAL EVENTS & ANNUAL ASSEMBLY PERMITS:**

Special Events were cancelled for most of 2020 due to the pandemic. Fire prevention officers conducted approximately 380 inspections for special events including fairs, festivals, major league football and concerts. They issued 479 permits for special events and 737 permits for annual assemblies, including new free permits for businesses like restaurants that were required to move outdoors. During 2020, the inspectors in this team played a critical role in opening safe shelters for people experiencing homelessness, as well as approvals for field hospitals, vaccination and testing sites related to Seattle’s response to the pandemic.

**FIRE INVESTIGATION UNIT:**

In 2020, the FIU investigated the origin and cause of 510 incidents; of these investigations, 157 were determined to be accidental, 256 incendiary/arson, 96 were left undetermined and one had "other" cause.

**SPECIAL HAZARDS:**

Fire permit specialists issued a total of 5,321 hazmat permits for hazards, from storage of combustible gases to welding on marine vessels to industrial and commercial chemicals.

**SYSTEMS TESTING:**

Fire inspectors provided oversight to testing and repairs for 27,551 fire protection systems at 14,770 premises in the city. SFD worked with building owners to restore and repair over 3,100 deficient systems, including fire alarms and sprinklers, which have an important impact on preserving lives and protecting property.

**INSPECTIONS FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION & REMODEL:**

Performed 4,500 inspections at construction sites, focusing on the installation and inspection of fire protection systems.

**COMPLIANCE:**

Fire prevention officers conducted 1,152 inspections.

**PLAN REVIEW:**

Fire protection engineers received and reviewed 1,186 architectural plans, completing 60% within 3 weeks and 1,125 fire alarm/fire sprinkler systems, completing 73% of these within four weeks.
COVID-19 curtailed many of the traditional education and outreach activities planned by the Public Affairs division. However, the team found many ways to keep connected with the community through its COVID-19 health and safety messaging and alternative ways to share important fire safety messages.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

The public information team helped to facilitate many press events related to COVID-19 during 2020 to highlight the first responder testing site, community testing sites, mobile assessment teams and more. Additionally, the team worked in the City’s Joint Information Center during activations for the pandemic, winter weather and civil unrest. The amount of public information required during 2020 was significant and the team worked to utilize many different avenues to push out information virtually to keep the community informed.

King County Fire Chiefs Association PIO Subgroup
Both members of the team served leadership roles in the King County Fire Chiefs Public Information Officer Subgroup, which played a significant role promoting COVID-19 safety information to Seattle and King County residents.

Public Affairs filmed a video to emphasize public health measures in a creative way; the video became SFD’s most viewed video in history with over 11k shares.

Example of graphics included in social media toolkits developed by the KCFCA PIO Subgroup
PUBLIC EDUCATION

As the pandemic forced the cancellation of in-person presentations and events, much of SFD’s education work shifted online.

Smoke alarm installations
Installed 58 smoke/CO alarms although the general smoke/CO alarm installation program was placed on hold for much of the year.

Multi-lingual cooking fire safety videos
In partnership with the King County Fire & Life Safety Association, produced a cooking safety video in 15 languages, including ASL. The video was widely shared across the region and throughout the state.

Apartment fire safety
Developed an online training for apartment managers, including a video emphasizing the important steps of evacuating and sheltering in place. Increased publication of the Apartment Safety Fire newsletter to monthly and doubled the number of subscribers over 2019.

Vulnerable populations
Received a $190,000 Fire Prevention & Safety grant from FEMA to develop series of educational materials and videos in 15 languages. Seattle Fire will work with multi-cultural community-based organizations and Community Fire Safety Advocates to conduct home visits and install smoke/CO alarms.

Consulted with Community Fire Safety Advocates to shape outreach to limited English speaking residents during COVID-19. Developed pictorial materials used at the Rainier Beach COVID testing site.

Partnered with the Somali Health Board and Vendelia, who provided volunteers to help Somali visitors navigate the Rainier Beach test site. A short video was produced and shared on social media.

EDUCATION HIGHLIGHTS

March: Read Across America Week
Fire Chief Scoggins celebrated Read Across America week with an in-person visit to the kids at the Rainier Vista Boys and Girls Club for a reading of Dr. Seuss’ classic, “Oh, the Places You’ll Go.” Everyone stayed engaged and the discussion was lively throughout.

June-July: SPR Summer Child Care Partnership
SFD partnered with Seattle Parks & Recreation to distribute summer safety booklets to all Seattle community centers providing summer daycare. Public Affairs also reached out to local Boys & Girls Clubs and distributed nearly 1,000 booklets throughout the season.

September: Back to School Event
Partnered with Neighborhood House by providing fire safety 1,500 pens with home fire escape messaging.

Seattle Fire Day
SFD and the Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI) hosted a virtual Seattle Fire Day in September. Using the power of Facebook, the event featured a mix of pre-recorded and live activities for youth and their families. Videos provided tours of the fireboat and a rescue dog demonstration. For the first time, too, content was provided in Spanish to include multilingual families.

October: SPL Fire Prevention Month Partnership
For Fire Prevention Month in October, Seattle Fire partnered with the Seattle Public Library to develop a four video, online series, “A Peek Inside the Fire Station.” Presented in both English and Spanish, a children’s librarian provided an introductory lesson, then preschoolers got a first-hand look at what firefighters wear to stay safe, how firefighters live at the station and how the many tools on a fire engine help them do their job.
The Public Affairs division was able to hold several of its annual events in alignment with public health guidance.

Fire Chief Scoggins and Acting Police Chief Diaz raised the U.S. flag on the Space Needle while crews at each station read aloud the names of the 343 firefighters who perished on Sept. 11, 2001.

On Oct. 5, Seattle Fire remembered all of its firefighters who have died in the line of duty in a small ceremony at the Fallen Firefighter Memorial in Occidental Park. To coincide with our local event, on Oct. 2 the department participated in the nationwide event to light the night for fallen firefighters. T-Mobile Park and CenturyLink Field lit their stadiums in red, and fire apparatus across the City turned on emergency lights.

In partnership with the U.S. Marine Corps, Seattle Fire held drive-through toy collection events at University Village and in Rainier Beach. Including cash donations, the drives were able to provide several thousands books, games, toys and bicycles (including helmets) to families in need.
Chapter 35.103 RCW: Revised Code of Washington Chapter 35.103 was passed into law during the 2005 legislative session (House Bill 1756). This law mandated certain response criteria be established and measured by fire departments across the State of Washington beginning in 2007 with an analysis of responses in 2006. The requirement was passed and is now the law for all substantially career fire departments. The purpose of this law is to report to the Governing Body of each fire jurisdiction, as well as to the residents of any given area, how the fire department is doing in meeting its established emergency response standards. These standards take into consideration a number of response types: A) Fire Suppression, B) Emergency Medical Services - Basic Life Support (BLS), C) Emergency Medical Services - Advanced Life Support (ALS), D) Special Operations (i.e. Hazardous Materials response and Technical Rescue response), E) Aircraft rescue and firefighting, F) Marine rescue and firefighting, G) Wildland firefighting.